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ABSTRACT

This issue of UNESCO's "Education for All: Making It Work" shows how the SHAPE project's message of autonomy has been translated into productive work, community participation, emphasis on local context, self-reliance and innovations. Since 1987, the Self-Help Action Plan for Education (SHAPE) in Zambia reflects a new philosophy introduced by the Zambian government to respond to dwindling funds and acute lack of materials. SHAPE encourages education policymakers and administrators to take initiatives and stimulate interest in education, and to find funding and materials for schools. The project has now reached all primary schools in Zambia. Chapters include: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Reform from Top to Bottom"; (3) "The SHAPE Approach"; (4) "Solutions in Action"; (5) "Inspectors and Colleagues"; (6) "Taking SHAPE"; (7) "From Teachers to Trainers"; (8) "Changes in the Neighborhood"; (9) "Financing and Sustainability: SHAPE in the Long Run"; (10) "Conclusion: The SHAPE Legacy." Charts, graphs, and a bibliography conclude the text. (EH)

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EDUCATION FOR ALL

Making it work

INNOVATIONS SERIES

ED 423 153

The Self-help Action Plan for Education (SHAPE) in Zambia

SO 028 350

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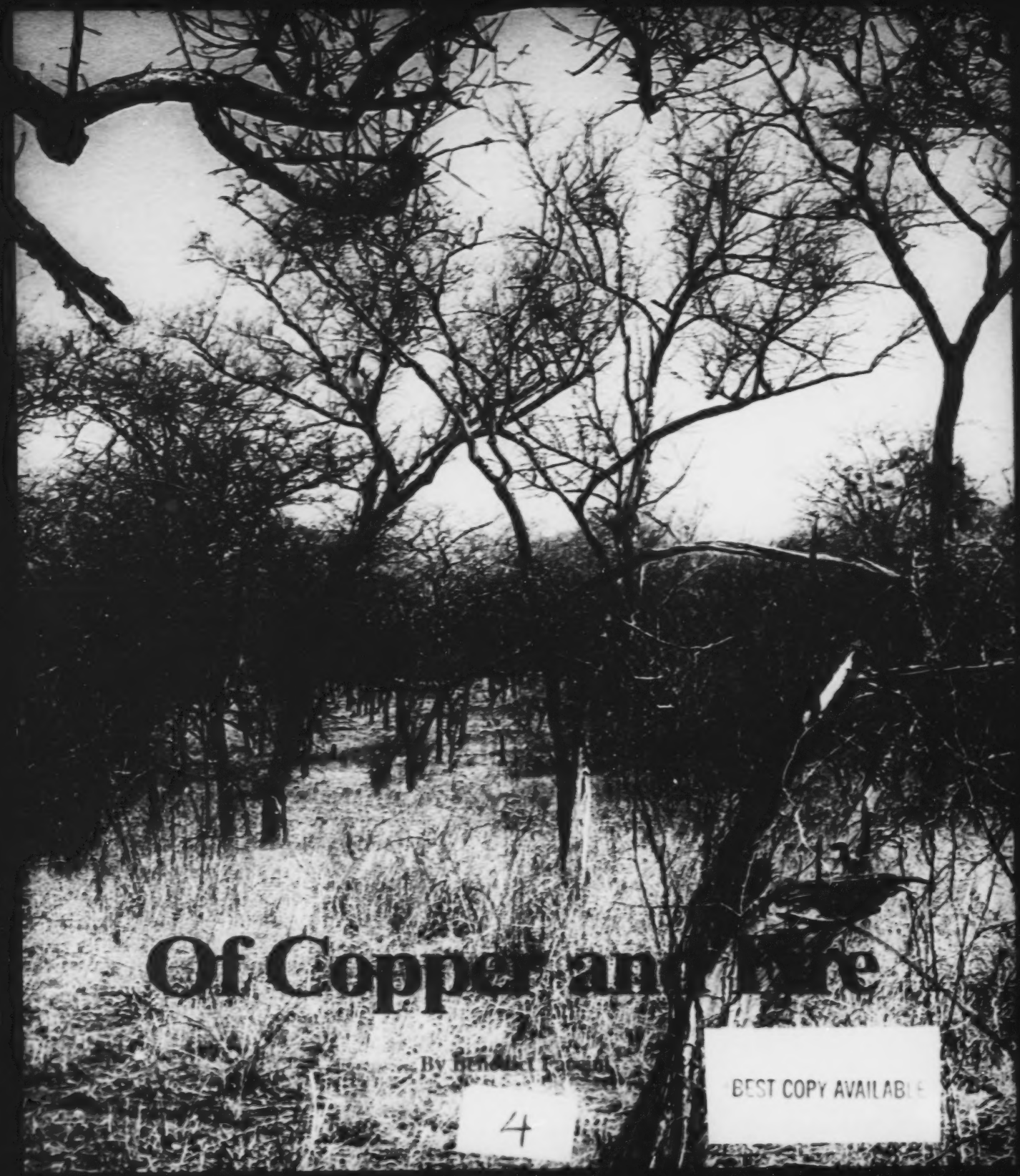

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Education for All: Making it Work

About the project...

The World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, recognized that a policy of «more of the same» would not be sufficient to achieve the goal of education for all. Educational systems in most countries clearly need an injection of fresh ideas, a broader vision of how the basic learning needs of all might be met, and the courage to turn this vision into practice.

It was the quest for an expanded and renovated vision of basic education which prompted UNESCO and UNICEF to launch their joint project «EDUCATION FOR ALL: MAKING IT WORK» right after Jomtien. The two Organizations decided to disseminate and promote examples of educational change –both in the realm of formal and non- formal education– through which the principles of Jomtien would come to life: programmes which provide learning opportunities for children, youth, and adults, including underserved groups and those with special needs; programmes which focus on actual learning acquisition, rather than on mere participation or certification requirements; programmes which aim to provide a solid foundation for life-long learning, which are responsive to the learning needs and conditions of the socio-cultural environment, and which build effective partnerships with local communities and parents.

UNESCO and UNICEF believe that effective and sustainable change in education arises from the inventiveness, experience and dedication of educators, parents and community leaders at the grassroots. The «EDUCATION FOR ALL: MAKING IT WORK» project shows that educational innovation and change are already underway in all developing countries and that even the poorest countries are able to take up the challenge of devising educational programmes to fit their means, needs, and aspirations.

The project strategy emphasizes educational innovation in practice rather than discourse. The INNOV database presents many little-known experiences, some of them with considerable potential. The most promising and significant ones are showcased in the present series of booklets, or through films contained in the EDUCATION FOR ALL VIDEOBANK. Others are grouped together and compared in a new series of THEMATIC PORTFOLIOS, devoted to critical issues in basic education.

All these resource materials are used in training workshops, inter-project visits and similar activities meant to support specialists and planners from developing countries in their struggle to turn education for all into reality.

The project team will be pleased to receive new information, comments and suggestions from all those interested in promoting change and innovation in basic education. We particularly appeal to UNICEF and UNESCO colleagues in the field to co-operate actively with the project.

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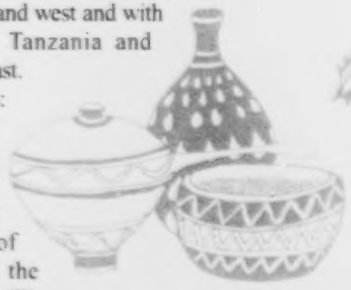
Introduction

It is mid-afternoon on the outskirts of Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. People stand sheltered from the sun under large trees or make their way towards the markets carrying bags, pots and bundles of wood. The road out of the city sweeps across the landscape, cutting its way through dry grass and parched earth. The large compounds of Lusaka with their traffic and noise slowly disappear to give way to villages with painted walls hidden in the folds of the land. As evening approaches, groups of women hurry to draw water and call the children. Villagers and city dwellers alike prepare for a new day.

Zambia lies to the north of Southern Africa. It shares borders with Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe to the south and west and with Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zaire to the north and east. Seven national languages: Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja and Tonga along with English make up the linguistic complexity of the area. Nearly half the population of over 8 million now live in urban areas.



The modern history of Zambia is closely linked to its huge copper output which still accounts for 90 per cent of exports. In the years following independence from the United Kingdom, in 1964, Zambia had one of the fastest growing economies and markets in Africa. Local production soared, business grew and a certain level of industrialization was achieved. When, however, the price of copper fell dramatically in 1975, the economy was stranded. The dependency on copper that was once a source of wealth was suddenly a crippling burden. Development was shattered in its first steps and Zambia plunged into a crisis which the country is still trying to resolve to this day. Zambia's landlocked position, caught between eight countries, did nothing to help as copper, the main export, is heavy and extremely difficult to transport. The outbreak of armed conflict in Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique then closed off the borders and Zambia was left to cope with its problems alone. To deal with the scale of the crisis, the country began borrowing from multilateral agencies and international markets. Before long, Zambia had accumulated a huge debt which had to be repaid. The government was encouraged to make budgetary savings and soon substantial cuts in all sectors including education began to take their toll.

As the economy came to suffer, so did the education system. School-leavers were no longer finding jobs and it became more and more difficult for many parents to keep their children in school. Food prices rose, wages froze. The country's education system was in the frontline of this uncertainty. It tried to follow the changes in the economy but the situation was constantly shifting. Furthermore, "the government", says Dr Wim Hoppers, first co-ordinator of the Self-help Action Plan for Education (SHAPE), "was looking to education as the answer, but just as the economy was unsuitable for the country's needs so was the education system."

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Reform from top to bottom

Changing the education system became an urgency and the moment seemed ripe for reform - past colonial structures and irrelevance to the local situation were paralyzing education and development. Places in schools had increased since independence but the move towards quality had come to a standstill. Accordingly, between 1974 and 1978, reforms, which matched the post-independence ideology of participation and social progress, were implemented around a larger concept of Education for Development. Decentralization and community participation were seen, by many, as vital elements of this step towards change and they gradually became targets for the reform process. Aside from these policy changes it was decided by presidential decree that to cope with the growing unemployment problem, give young people survival skills and generate much-needed funds, all schools should attempt to involve themselves in some kind of production; this would lessen reliance on government funds and create a degree of autonomy within schools.

The staff at the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), observed these changes from the sidelines and saw that there was an opportunity for radical change. Their eagerness was all the greater as they realized that although changes had been decreed, there were few guidelines and there was little or no co-ordination between the schools. SIDA saw that, within this void and need, a whole programme and method could evolve. So it was that the Ministry of General Education, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology along with SIDA decided to act and together began participating in what was to become a review of Zambian education and the establishment of the SHAPE programme.

With initial funds from SIDA, a first co-ordination team was recruited to survey the national education situation. The order of the day, according to L. Musonda, Executive Secretary of SHAPE, was "to discover the possiblities for change at all levels and create a method capable of bringing relevant education and innovation to schools." It was obvious that education had to change and adapt to the Zambian context, but the way was still uncertain. It was argued that once the education system was relevant, then the population would be in a better situation to cope with the faults in society and the economy.

Reforms had taken a long time in coming but, in the meantime, the population, as the SHAPE co-ordination team were going to find out, had not been waiting for directives from above. The actors in education and particularly the teachers had, in many ways, already organized themselves at local level and innovative practices were being carried out in classrooms often without inspectors or ministry officials being aware of these changes. The new SHAPE team set about examining the situation, taking up these silent unnoticed innovations and successful improvisations, listening closely to the teachers and communities.

This system of surveying and joining forces was eventually to become the SHAPE network, method

and programme. It, therefore, grew organically out of the needs assessment and the co-ordination established by the team. As the initial team persevered, it brought all the elements together, creating links and a system of communication between government officials, school inspectors and teachers. A natural web appeared that was given cohesion by the SHAPE philosophy. It welded the actors of education in Zambia together in a common cause.

No pilot scheme was considered as it was shown that many of the innovations proposed by SHAPE were already being implemented; what was needed was a coherent programme. The first task, then, was to build up a valid education structure so that it could be orientated towards practice and not merely theory. The emphasis was to be on local employment opportunities but with a strong educational content (literacy, mathematics and general knowledge). There seemed no point producing unemployable young Zambians to cope with the growing umemployment crisis. The increasing scarcity of jobs and growing menial task market meant that, in fact, temporary, tangible employment solutions in the form of survival skills (agricultural methods, crafts and sales skills but also basic literacy) were going to be of greater use than developed academic qualifications.

The SHAPE approach

From the start SHAPE was conceived as a permanent structure and not as a temporary support system whilst the economy improved, nor was it ever to be a general prescription either, but rather a means of implementing change rapidly and efficiently at all levels of the basic education system (Grades 1 to 9). It is, as Dr Wim Hoppers states, "a process-orientated programme and not a product-orientated one." In many ways SHAPE picked up where the teachers and Ministry left off. It grew out of the vacuum created by the economic crisis but managed to establish an autonomous body, guidelines and organizational support for the need to change and reform education. Relevance and maximum use of the local context were deemed vital. If the school were in an urban environment, then children had to try and derive the most profit they could from their setting. This emphasis on local context shifted the previous importance on pure academic learning and often irrelevant curricula. If English, for example, were the subject, then the pupil had to be able to express himself or herself in a play or poem, if mathematics were the topic, then the learner had to be able to count or master simple accounting. What was relevant in one setting was not relevant in another; regional differences and local realities meant that each school was encouraged to develop a particular emphasis.

With an increasingly difficult national situation, education coupled with production was becoming a necessity. SHAPE came in as a method to facilitate the teaching process, improve conditions in schools and precisely encourage teachers to initiate production and other practical work. The SHAPE programme gave teachers the chance to change schools into centres of production and educational experimentation but, more than that, it confirmed their role as initiators of change. Production work did, indeed, serve as the basis for the SHAPE programme with its philosophy of self-help for pupils, schools and teachers but within this thinking production became both a pedagogical instrument and a source of supplementary funding for school materials and teachers' professional activities. Further educational policies and a wider SHAPE philosophy were then grafted onto this. A pattern and methodology appeared which had several basic targets:

- to allow teachers to exercise individual and collective responsibility for their professional development,
- to broaden the educational experience of pupils,
- to enable schools to serve the development of their communities and the nation, through production and resource materials,
- to respond directly to initiatives from teachers at grassroot level in conjunction with pupils, parents and the community,
- to raise schools' capacity for self-help in professional and material terms,
- to improve quality and relevance in education through better skills training and the provision of resources,
- to use the school as a base for the organization of collective actions.

Solutions in action

On the 1 January 1987, the implementation of SHAPE began. Rather than cast aside the reforms that had been attempted in the seventies, SHAPE tried to build on the previous general aims of quality improvement, decentralization and curriculum relevance. The implementation process had two dimensions : the one physical with the provision of funds or the granting of vehicules and the other organizational and pedagogical with the use of the innovative qualities and mobilization of teachers and the community. Clear policies structured this implementation. They consisted of the:

- organization of an active SHAPE network to include teachers, inspectors and college tutors
- staff training of teachers already in school through what became known as In-Service Education for Teachers (INSET),
- curriculum planning and development to adapt to the local context,
- establishment of committees or clusters at school, zone, district, regional and national level,
- clear definition in schools and colleges of the purpose and principles of SHAPE in light of experiences gained through regional and district information meetings,
- training sessions to familiarize regions with the SHAPE methodology and aims,
- training of resource teachers in various subjects of the curriculum,
- exploration of the potential for improving on-going innovations and initiating new ones,
- production of SHAPE guidelines for schools,
- informing of teachers and officials of innovations in other countries and provinces of Zambia through study tours,
- support to resource and production work in selected colleges, schools and districts,
- material back-up such as vehicles, but also the tools and procedures for local monitoring,
- encouraging of local school committees to gather together enough money for so-called SHAPE funds

to receive tools and teaching materials and the creation of resource centres to become focal points for the dissemination of SHAPE ideas.

By providing transport, funded by SIDA, the SHAPE programme was able to really begin activating its network. With each mode of transport, for example bicycles for teachers, motorbikes for district level and pick-up vehicles for college and provincial level, SHAPE gave each member of the programme the opportunity to co-ordinate and become mobile. This initial investment was made on exceedingly strict rules: the vehicles were only to be used for SHAPE, they were to be regularly repaired with a separate local fund and only certain licensed drivers could use them. This policy has been most successful as ten years later most of the thirty-five original vehicles distributed are in good running condition.

Co-ordination between teachers and district officials also began. Actors in education and the local community members met to discuss their needs. Accordingly teachers, hand in hand with the local communities, established their demands and set out their ideas on education. These meetings helped schools organize and collect funds which then meant they could request and receive SHAPE activities (tools, materials, techniques and books). They also served as a first encounter with SHAPE's message of self-help and resourcefulness.

Funds from SHAPE were provided to selected schools and districts for the creation of so-called resource rooms or larger resource centres. Two types of resource centre evolved: the first school-based as a resource room or reference bank, the second built specifically for a district or province as a focal point. With this system any strategically placed school could, theoretically, become a resource centre if the teachers so desired. A school-based resource centre is a room created (built by pupils and teachers) or set aside in the school with books, materials, teaching aids and all kinds of objects that might be of use to the learning process. An INSET co-ordinator or senior teacher is in charge of this room and can delve into it for inspiration. Pupils use it as a source or library where they can find new information and discover concepts to help in their studies. These resource centres also serve as information focal points for the ideas central to SHAPE. They encourage improvization in the development of materials and allow teachers to interact. They are meant to be places for teachers and other educational personnel to meet, explore new methods of teaching, identify needs, organize professional and production activities, undertake research and evaluation, give demonstration lessons, provide support to colleagues and create teaching materials. Books on teaching techniques and descriptions of SHAPE activities written by the Ministry of Education with the SHAPE Secretariat can all be found here and the rooms are often large enough to house SHAPE committee meetings, INSET training sessions and school cluster seminars. They are tangible proof of the changes SHAPE has brought about and show, as E. Banda of the SHAPE secretariat says, "that an extensive education system has managed to put responsibility where it belongs - with the community and teacher." The elaboration of resource rooms was central to the programme's methodology and facilitated implementation, particularly in rural areas. As resource centres were placed at strategic points, teachers and pupils from a particular area could all have access to new materials and discover what SHAPE meant to them and the

changing of Zambian education. In many cases they were able to visit these centres because of the bicycles provided and the newly-created communication network. The creation of school clusters further eased work by bringing different schools of a same area together. In each case, these schools were based around so-called model schools which were identified as centres of good SHAPE practice and again easily accessible to the greatest number of people. These schools were targeted to also co-ordinate INSET and materials development activities as well as lead zone plans. They play a clear role in the SHAPE structure by linking up with the district level. The choice of schools did sometimes give rise to conflicts as some schools felt they deserved more attention than others but generally a balance was struck.

Just as there are model schools, there are also model and specialized teachers and co-ordinators. They are the key organizers of SHAPE and particularly INSET activities at local school level. Their role is to lead teaching and learning activities in the schools (especially in production work), motivate pupils, create effective education at local level and propagate SHAPE's ideas.

Slowly but surely a SHAPE network, attitude and methodology came to light, almost naturally, connecting teachers, communities and Ministry officials. Teachers were in touch with inspectors and provinces and the Ministry was aware of the latest changes and moves in schools. Education with Production (EWP) served as the concrete concept around which the newly-born SHAPE programme could evolve and the INSET teacher training programme reinforced the structure. Very soon a system of exchange and self-help was established with the various resource centres serving as mini-laboratories testing educational methodologies.

National Teachers Resource Centre, SHAPE

Run by Joe Kawonga, the resource centre in Lusaka serves as the focal point for all resource work in Zambia. Set in old colonial buildings, the centre has a number of activities. A large seminar and meeting room is used for bringing teachers, inspectors and the SHAPE secretariat together. A library stores information on teaching techniques and general curriculum information. A securely locked store room is piled high with bicycles, motorbikes, spades and other tools which are available if a school shows sufficient capability to put them to good use. The centre's meeting room is used for discussions about advances in resource work and the implementation of new interesting teaching techniques. Mr Kawonga sees himself as an innovator in all fields. As he says, "each day I have to invent new ideas to sustain interest and morale in the pupils I teach". His innovations not only keep his own pupils' attention but they are also put to good use for the benefit of those teachers who have no materials or are interested in hearing of new ways of motivating learners. He teaches colleagues how to build furniture out of papier maché and uses old bits of wire to create toys, implements and teaching aids. From a study tour in Ethiopia, funded by SIDA, he brought back a stove-building technique which he hopes will revolutionize cooking methods and capacity in many villages. With only clay, sand and grass, mixed and left to bake five days in the sun, he shows how to put together an efficient and fast stove which requires very little wood. Inside the classroom, Mr Kawonga's inventiveness is evident everywhere: desks and benches made out of clay blocks, portable blackboards or information wheels, charts, magnet boards and pin hole cameras can be seen. These he shows to other teachers during INSET activities and it is his hope that all teachers in Zambia will become innovators eager to spread the message of self-reliance to all classrooms.

Inspectors and colleagues

The SHAPE system covers the whole of Zambia and has a structure that breaks with the inherited and top-heavy education system of previous years. At each local level, there are zones consisting of some five to ten schools. These are represented by teachers and community members and are centred around a main or model school. The clusters, in turn, are subject to District SHAPE committees consisting of a District Inspector, home economics, industrial arts, agriculture, college and INSET co-ordinators, local community leaders and sometimes NGOs. Above this district level are the Provincial SHAPE committees made up of Senior Inspectors of Schools and co-ordinators in the various subjects of production as well as the INSET co-ordinator. The SHAPE Secretariat with its Executive Secretary and four co-ordinators, who are all Senior Inspectors of Schools, then forms the last level. This Secretariat is part of the Ministry of Education and, as such, consults with other Ministry staff. It is responsible for a variety of matters for the whole country, generally concerning staff training, monitoring and research. It also directs and co-ordinates the financial support from SIDA to those schools which make a valid proposal for support and it keeps an eye on the flow of resources and materials for the various production units. The Secretariat is in contact with the University of Zambia and other institutes to ensure the quality of education and discuss policy or curricula. Its role is also to maintain the continued relevance of SHAPE to the national context and to co-ordinate with other development programmes in the country. The SHAPE Secretariat meets at least once a year with all the regions and debates on problems, obstacles to implementation, constraints, budgets and policy.

The relationship with the Ministry remains nebulous. On the one hand, SHAPE is very much part of the Ministry; on the other hand, it is independent and in fact, because of its self-reliance and autonomous nature, is contrary to the very concept of a centralized ministry or institution. This semi-autonomous status of the programme is both a strength and a weakness: it ensures recognition and support but also a certain degree of special attention as SHAPE is exterior to the Ministry. The Planning Unit of the Ministry of Education and, for the moment SIDA, are still always present as the ultimate authority during quarterly reviews. Each layer of the structure, that is zone, district, provincial and national, must submit an annual review to the SHAPE Secretariat.

The committees at each level have precise roles and duties assigned to them by the Secretariat:

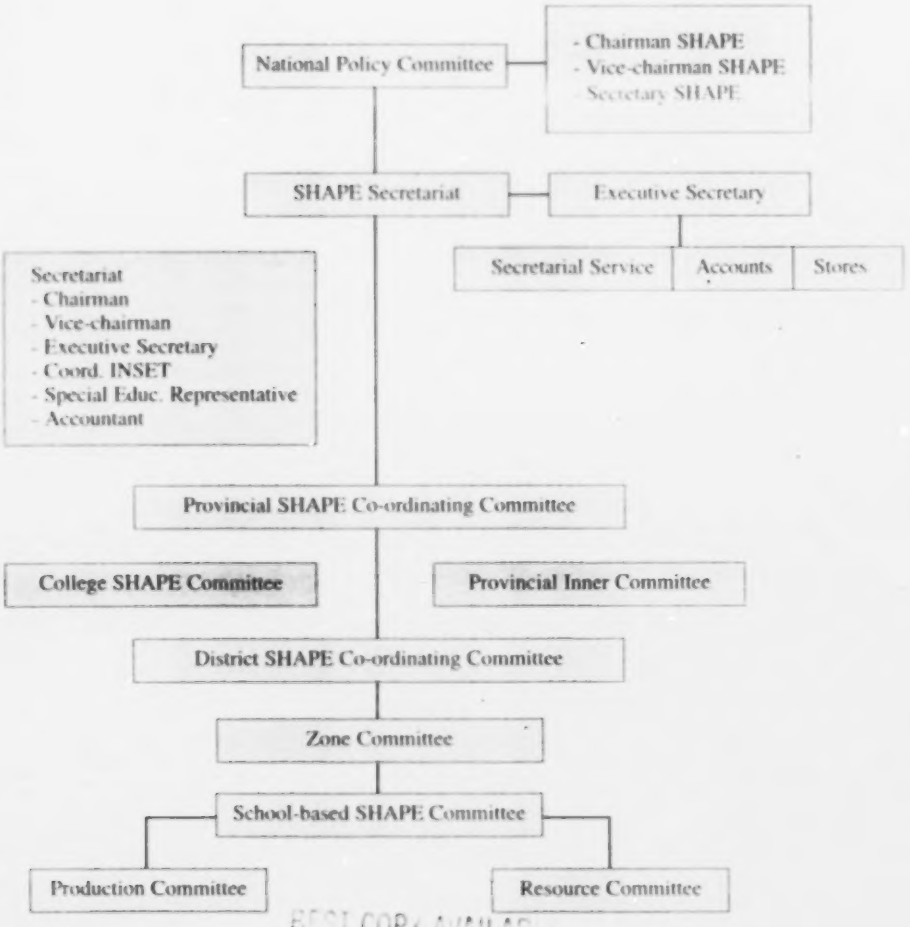
- At zone or cluster level, co-ordinators animate some five to ten schools, identify innovations and problems in the classroom and create a network of support for teachers, especially in remote areas. They provide information on their SHAPE activities (agriculture, home economics and industrial arts, etc for the committees at district level).

- At district level, inspectors and local ministry officials co-ordinate SHAPE's programme. A SHAPE management committee oversees the district's activities and collects information from all the zones in the area. Financial requests from the

schools to start up a SHAPE activity first come to this district level. It is up to the district to verify the validity of these requests. This level is also responsible for the development of resource centres at strategic points in the region and for making suggestions to teachers regarding the evolution of SHAPE concepts.

- At provincial or regional level, information from district level is stored and filtered. This level is also responsible for the Teacher Training Colleges where the elaboration of SHAPE and particularly INSET activities is carried out. This level is the closest to the central Secretariat and, therefore, in contact with developments at ministerial and national level.

- At Secretariat level, the five members are responsible for the smooth running of the national programme, monitoring, evaluation and policy development. Relations with the donor SIDA and the Ministry of Education are based at this level.



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Taking Shape

Even though SHAPE was conceived as a support system, it is not merely a structure to introduce or modify the national curriculum. It encourages each teacher to take liberties with the curriculum, inject it with ideas, use personal innovative methods, discover the diversity of life and materials within the local context, elaborate ways of instructing pupils in methods of personal hygiene and health (on such issues as AIDS and malaria) and to develop ways of combining academic and production work.

The curriculum at national level is a primary school curriculum which offers a variety of subjects from numeracy to literacy and practical and problem-solving skills. Many teachers now use songs, charts, plays and local materials in their classrooms. These teaching techniques have, often, been acquired at one of the many resource centres or INSET meetings. They may also be an innovation and improvization on the part of the teacher. A certain SHAPE approach in the delivery of the curriculum can, however, be discerned:

- it encourages individual potential, initiative, responsibility, eagerness and creativity;
- it gives rise to positive attitudes towards work, responsibility, local traditions and the preservation of nature,
- it creates a balance between learning and production to suit both the individual's and the community's needs,
- it overcomes discrimination, particularly towards girls and women, and encourages an understanding of all cultures.

The emphasis on production in the national curriculum and the extensive ground work by SHAPE has meant that, by definition, each school is a production unit. This system is, of course, highly useful in a country like Zambia where financial resources are low but there is a danger, and the SHAPE Secretariat and provincial or district committees have pointed it out, that production could take precedence and overshadow academic work. Attention is, therefore, given to finding the right

combination of subjects and creating a balance between extra-curricular production work, practical and academic subjects. A particular time in the day is allotted to production work which may range from agriculture to school furniture repair and another lesson period to academic subjects. L. Musonda of the SHAPE Secretariat says that, since the inception of SHAPE, a teacher's role is also to find ways of creating income and arousing interest in productive work, broadening the pupils' horizons and possibilities.

Education with production has four main results:

- it facilitates pedagogical skills and learning based on practical knowledge, problem-solving, planning and initiative,
- it changes pupils' view of production and manual labour,
- it has economic benefits for the pupil through the sale of finished products,
- its involvement of the surrounding population removes many of the barriers between school and community

Children are encouraged to acquire a skill which will help them in later life and one for which they feel they have a gift. The selection of appropriate production projects is particularly important as the risk of not being able to go into secondary school is great and there is a certain urgency in the fact that many children have to learn some form of survival skill. Due to lack of materials, however, most production work involves recycling. The wood left over from desk repair is used to make chopping boards, spare metal is made into chairs, window bars, weighing machines and tools. The children are taught to give each product a professional finish and it is not rare for a teacher to see one of his or her former pupils selling products in the market place.

Education with Production (EWP) has three main frameworks: industrial arts, home economics and agriculture. The scope of each activity normally changes from school to school for the obvious reason that some skills, such as agricultural techniques, are more useful and easier to practise in some areas rather than others. The teacher plays an active part in the child's learning process, and a particular initiative by the teacher can end up having many benefits. For example, in some rural areas, school materials such as glue are made from vegetable matter; in urban areas, waste paper collected off the streets is being made into papier maché furniture and bowls. When these products are sold, often to the local community, the money is placed in a school fund kept by the headteacher. This fund can be used to finance further school projects or to organize training sessions. A particular campaign for desk repair has been carried out throughout most schools in Zambia and, thanks to techniques and funds provided by SHAPE, old desks have been rehabilitated and new ones made. In many schools, the classroom situation has improved and pupils who used to sit on the floor can now sit at solid desks. Lack of materials is, gradually, leading schools to produce their own tools. Whereas before schools would have created a fund for tools, they are now being fashioned out of recycled metal. SHAPE's self-help message has indeed taken root.

From teachers to trainers

Just as each school could be termed a production unit, it could also be called a teacher-training centre. SHAPE puts emphasis on teachers' initiative and resourcefulness, which might be seen by some as an onus but, in fact, it gives credibility to their views and underlines their crucial role. Teachers have a say in the hierarchy of the Ministry and, as Dr Wim Hoppers, one of the founding thinkers of SHAPE says, "the programme recognizes teachers' innovations and makes them into a permanent structure."

A major breakthrough in the development of SHAPE came with the introduction of the in-service teacher training programme. It was thought by the Ministry and its advisory groups that if so much emphasis were to be placed on the teacher's inventiveness, production skills and community role, then these same teachers would have to be trained in new techniques that went way beyond their pre-service training. Furthermore, in a context of less government funding and scarce materials, the teachers were going to need all the support they could get from each other. The INSET programme was, therefore, founded taking into account that two years of pre-service training were not enough for teachers to be able to cope efficiently with the numerous challenges facing them. Certain lines of thought to guide teachers and help them structure their teaching careers were developed. Teachers were encouraged to:

- promote forms of classroom practice which enable children to be willing, effective and independent learners, responding to the individual needs of both pupils and colleagues,
- adopt a more practical and active approach to learning and ensure the curriculum is wide, balanced and relevant,
- develop cross-curricular activities and a positive attitude towards today's multi-cultural society, make sure that sexist or stereotypical features of schooling are eliminated and provide for children with special needs,
- develop and support leadership in schools to encourage a co-operative approach to management, supporting colleagues in the continuous development of their subjects and strategies and hence increasing job satisfaction and opportunities for staff promotion.

As there are not government funds to provide this training, teachers look after their own professional development and that of their colleagues and this within the self-help context that is so specific to SHAPE. Just as one school can become a resource centre, a teacher can also become a resource teacher who has the duty of improving the quality of teaching in colleagues and co-ordinating SHAPE activities. This process of responsibility and co-operation was particularly needed in rural areas where teacher isolation meant that support from colleagues was limited. In some cases the nomination of SHAPE co-ordinators led to some friction in schools when, for example, a senior teacher rather than the head was identified as the main organizer of activities. As the basic aim of INSET is to allow teachers to look after their own professional development, this also

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independence necessary to take care of themselves and become forces ready to act, adapt and prepare for any negative change.

Seminars and workshops are regularly organized through the INSET network, and teachers with particular skills are identified to support others. These workshops are organized at all levels: local or zone, district, provincial and national. Workshops are held, for instance, in which teachers, well-versed in production or building skills, demonstrate how to build a resource centre or repair desks. Teacher colleges are a major focal point for INSET activities. Here, staff leadership and developments in methodology can be discussed and innovations identified and debated. These meetings are structured to allow teachers to compare notes and address issues of relevance to the whole education system. Many teachers, especially older ones, may never have had the chance to compare classroom experiences with colleagues since leaving college. Others realize that they can take collective decisions which, because of the SHAPE network, they know can reach the Ministry and, hopefully, have an effect. The fact that a teacher is able to reach a decision-maker at state level is considered vital and it gives him or her a true sense of self-worth. It is this kind of communication from the grassroots upwards which so characterizes SHAPE. In the last year a nationwide newsletter entitled *The SHAPE Crusader* has made its appearance. It is distributed by the teachers themselves or by visiting inspectors. Written by the Secretariat but with opinion pieces from teachers, it aims to inform primary school teachers, colleges and communities of the changes and developments in education. The articles for teachers concentrate on innovative methods of teaching and ways of production, whilst pieces from rural and urban headmasters describe the problems schools are facing and how they are coping. It is distributed throughout

involves a wide concept of freedom for the teacher and means that the emphasis on the fostering and nurturing of replicable innovative teaching techniques is great.

A teacher's competence and performance in the classroom are not merely linked to knowledge of the prescribed curriculum but are also based on respect, self-confidence and the community role a teacher can play. These are not easy to attain and INSET allowed many teachers to reflect upon their role, upon the support they gave children and on the wider leadership and management position they fulfilled. This rethinking of teachers' roles and their capabilities has been particularly valid. In-service training has not only increased teacher efficiency but, as noted in SIDA's 1993 Evaluation Report to the Ministry of Education, thanks to INSET there is a remarkable demand for further development from individual teachers and a sense of collaboration across schools and teachers in educational development activities. Better teaching goes hand-in-hand with greater self-esteem, job satisfaction and stronger motivation and in Zambia where financial support is uncertain, these feelings have helped teachers achieve the

the country and aims to tighten the SHAPE message, so that, as E. Banda, of the SHAPE secretariat, says, "every little school in Zambia is aware of what other schools are doing."

Within the context of SHAPE and INSET, each person has a role to play in the school:

- pupils (boys and girls), as part of their schoolwork, repair desks, produce objects for sale and cultivate the land around the school,
- teachers orientate the learning process around the principles close to SHAPE (production, self-reliance and initiative); they start up new activities and ensure the continuity and acceptance of SHAPE principles within the school,
- headmasters discuss problems facing their schools and describe how SHAPE activities could help. They are in charge of the funds generated from production. The reinvestment of these funds, back into the school, is debated by the headmaster and colleagues,
- SHAPE and INSET co-ordinators and committees, within the school, review the schools' failures and successes in implementing SHAPE. Together with other teachers in their zone or cluster they plan a work schedule for each school and draft zone reports for the area. They constantly check on the awareness of SHAPE within their area and encourage progress in this. Updates in teaching techniques and experiences from schools are disseminated through the INSET network.

David Livingstone Teacher Training College

Set in the suburbs of Livingstone, in the Southern Province of Zambia, the college is home to 300 students who, according to Mr Choola, Principal of the College, learn how to survive as teachers. Mr Mbangweta, co-ordinates the SHAPE activities which range from agriculture, fish farming, cattle and gazelle raising, poultry farming, building techniques, home economics and industrial arts to specific INSET activities on classroom methodology. To one side of the college lies a vast green area called the Evergreen Garden. Here, cabbages, maize and tomatoes are grown for consumption by the students. What is left over is sold to the surrounding community. In fact deprived members of the nearby suburb are encouraged to come and weed in exchange for food. Street children and school drop-outs also have their little corner of the garden so that they can be certain, at least, of having some food. All training teachers have a plot of land with their name; it is their duty to learn how to make use of this patch. Progress and initiative are noted in detail. The manure from the goats, poultry and cattle is used to fertilize the soil and the left-over corn and cabbage is fed to the animals. A cycle of self-reliance has been created and it continues in all activities. The industrial arts centre sells furniture and mends desks for the surrounding schools. The home economics centre makes items and foodstuffs which are sold to the pupils and the community. The students realize that they are learning a whole variety of skills which will help them throughout their lives, especially when, as teachers, they are not certain of the future. Not one little area of the college is left untouched; it is either cultivated or built on to provide profitable workshops. The college is a small world in itself, and as Mr Mbangweta proudly declares, "we don't really need anything or anyone" and although this might seem surprising, it shows that the SHAPE programme is first and foremost a system of self-help, self-reliance and resourcefulness.

Changes in the neighbourhood

The fact that teachers were the main initiators of change, means that their role in the community has been enhanced. It is no longer rare for a teacher to help in a village or urban neighbourhood at weekends or play an active community role. In the words of Dr Wim Hoppers, "material incentives have decreased but social incentives have increased". Teacher involvement through production activities and field visits has also led to greater parent involvement. This, in itself, is a prime objective of the SHAPE philosophy, but it was difficult to implement as many parents were reticent about co-operating. At first they were sceptical of the developments taking place but as interaction with schools grew and the need for production increased, attitudes changed. The necessary implementation of minimal parent funding for some activities has meant that parents take a greater interest in schooling and want to know how their money has been used. Parent receptiveness to teacher initiative and children's schooling is a crucial element if the ideas central to SHAPE schools are to continue. It is a guarantee of sustainability. A web of fraternity has been gradually established by SHAPE: the parents trust that the teacher and school will provide results by teaching children valid skills, the teacher relies on the parents' support for production activities and community projects and finally the children need to know that both teacher and parents will give them the chance to prove themselves. Community members now regularly participate in school activities. They help in production work, particularly in industrial arts and agriculture. In rural areas villagers sometimes give practical lessons and their help is invaluable in lending tools and in providing cloth and needles for home economics classes.

Parents who have been involved now want to see results. Parent funding has also brought the community together as it requires collective decision-making. The parents, to a certain degree, feel that they have a part in the school as they, often, have contributed significantly to its building or development and since community involvement has evolved, there has been a noticeable drop in vandalism and school drop out in many areas. As Mrs Lwara, Lusaka Provincial Chairperson for SHAPE, says, "the parents feel the schools belong to

them too and this feeling of ownership spreads to the community at large." Unfortunately, drought in much of Zambia, has meant that agricultural activities, which would have involved the community, have been kept to a minimum, but the general emphasis on production and the establishment of shops in schools has led to more members of the community buying products from schools. To increase and consolidate this relationship SHAPE, in keeping with SIDA's recommendations, in its 1993 Report to the Ministry of Education, is currently trying to make full use of the existing Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) at all levels and this to encourage more and more parents and community leaders to play an active role in their children's schooling. Parents could, for example, increasingly take part in the training of teachers in locally-relevant skills and join in the designing of school plans. Guidelines for community participation, it has been suggested, could then be developed which would avoid community members feeling that they are not only called upon when schools are in trouble but are constantly needed for the good of the schools.

The Zambian tree

Raise not your hand against me

I am the heat in the cold winter nights
I am the friendly shade in the summer sun
My fruits are your refreshment

I am the beam that holds up your house
I am the board of your table
The bed on which you lie
The timber of your boat
The handle of your hoe

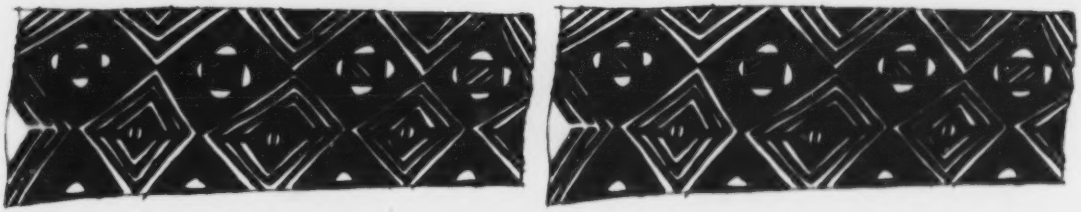
I am the wood of your cradle
The shell of your coffin

I am the gift of God, harm me not

Financing and sustainability: SHAPE in the long run

SIDA has said that there is a possibility it will withdraw its financial support in 1997. The annual budget for SHAPE from Sweden currently stands at 6.8 million Swedish Kroner (US $ 555,000) and has remained that amount for the last five years. SHAPE has been prepared for this weaning from the start. A rigourous financial order has constantly kept their relation free of ambiguities, and in the spirit of self-help, nothing has been given without a purpose. SHAPE has a separate account from that of the Ministry of Education and funds from Sweden are dealt with between SHAPE and SIDA. Until 1993 a Swedish accountant was in charge of funds but he has since handed over to a Zambian. All SHAPE funds in schools and colleges can be inspected at any time by the SHAPE accountant and District and Provincial Education Officers have the final responsibility for funds in their areas. Schools and ultimately district offices are, therefore, accountable for their expenditure. The conditions for financing the school level are strict, in keeping with the concept of only giving funds in reply to valid local initiative but it is important for schools to know that they can, if necessary, receive further funding.

The strength of SHAPE is that it required no extra structural creation; the SHAPE network was developed within the framework of an existing Ministry and not as an independent entity. Furthermore, no SHAPE member receives a salary from SIDA or from the SHAPE structure, money being spent exclusively on resources, materials and training. If funds are needed for a particular individual it is only in terms of training or expenses. Further funds are also available to SHAPE from schools generating money from production work. A minimal levy or donation is required of each school and this is pooled in a common fund. Other donors and financial partners are encouraged to use the SHAPE structure which has even succeeded in convincing the Ministry to keep funds at district and not national level. The British-funded Action to improve English, Mathematics and Science (AIEMS) and the Child-to-Child programme have both integrated the SHAPE system of management and financing. It seems important to note, however, that these projects are beginning to pay education officials for their work and those at SHAPE fear that the fragile balance between initiative, self-help and funding could be broken. SHAPE has managed to install in the minds of teachers a belief in themselves, in their own and their communities capabilities, and funding without initiative or self-reliance could easily upset



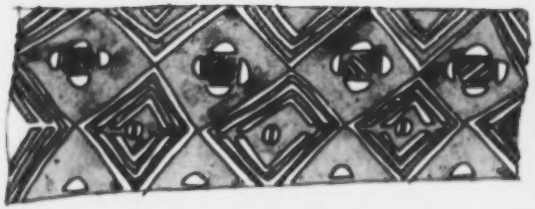
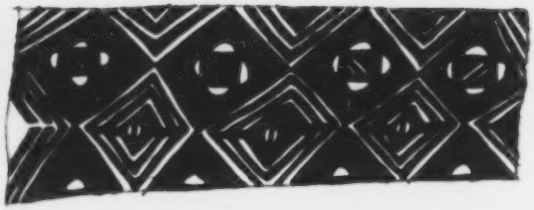
the situation and cause the SHAPE structure to crumble with wider implications for education in Zambia.

For the future, SHAPE still needs to find ways of consolidating its sustainability. This will require a more systematic monitoring, evaluation and research system which could include an effective follow-up covering all provinces equally. This will mean the creation of a small but viable research implementation team at SHAPE. Through this SHAPE could keep a sort of check-list of its goals and strategies, so as to carry on mobilizing resources through production activities, to guide the education system further towards the production of goods and services, to integrate educational training, to develop more pratical and relevant curricula, to continue teaching pupils survival skills and integrate gender issues and special education into the system. Monitoring appears important also to ensure clearer feedback on the process of implementation and the impact of the programme on school improvements. This will help organize the best use of scarce resources in the future. It will also provide data to support the continued development of schools truly suited to the community and the spread of teachers' individual and collective responsibility for their own professional needs.

Jorgen Christensen, Senior Programme Officer, Education, SIDA

Although SIDA funds SHAPE, it does not control it. "This important distinction has led to a fruitful relationship", says J. Christensen, "in which both funder and funded co-operate in a spirit of mutual respect." It could be said, without hesitation, that the project is in Zambian hands since apart from the initial financial input, there is no interference by SIDA. The SHAPE network is independent and, as such, flexible.

The success of the SHAPE programme, SIDA believes, is not simply due to the good sense of the ideas: it is also the work of many dedicated people in the SHAPE Secretariat and enthusiastic, eager teachers at the grassroots. Because it is driven by necessity, remarks J. Christensen, the SHAPE programme makes people work and achieve. SIDA strongly believes in the use of its funding. Paradoxically the concept of self-reliance and self-help at the core of SHAPE is somewhat contrary to this funding notion but in the difficult economic context facing Zambia, SIDA believes someone has to be there to provide the initial financial impetus. Furthermore, despite the vast achievements made by SHAPE, the Zambian government is facing a vital question: should it continue financing general education for all or rather concentrate on quality education for a happy few? SHAPE will need to reinforce its role in such a situation where survival skills are vital and quality basic education will only be possible through the generation of production funds, innovative pedagogical approaches, in-service teacher training and local support. As SHAPE corresponds to a deep-felt need, it will continue and as long as it does, says J. Christensen, "SIDA will avoid cutting off the funds abruptly and guide SHAPE towards even greater self-reliance."

Yet if SHAPE is to continue with its present rate of success and innovation, certain changes will have to be made. Recommendations on the part of the Secretariat, SIDA and teachers will have to be taken into consideration. For example, the development of committees and sub-committees should be restricted; it should remain a loose network and not a rigid system of consultation that might slow down change and innovation. Local initiative should be continually encouraged and guidelines for a rigorous assessment of EWP in schools should be developed. In light of these, vital products combining education with production and creating a sense of financial independence in all children should be identified. Resource centres should also be set up whenever possible, especially through local funding. If teachers cannot receive financial support, they must receive as much moral support as possible to be able to cope with heavy work loads and long hours. Finally, if the SHAPE message is to carry on, it should become as much a part of community life as it is of school life.

Despite these challenges, SHAPE, by virtue of its innovative nature and the magnitude of the problems it is facing, has an interest in being sustainable and adaptable. It was created to deal with changing situations and will continue to do so. The eventual withdrawal of SIDA funds is just another of these changes. As Mrs Malawo, SHAPE Co-ordinator in home economics says, "when SIDA withdraws we will be standing on our own two feet - but maybe with a slight limp". The Ministry is not indifferent to SHAPE's needs, and provision has been made to ensure that the project continues. It can be safely said that "despite material problems, every school in Zambia has benefited from the SHAPE programme" declares Mrs Musokotwane, home economics specialist and INSET co-ordinator. "The Ministry", she says, "would be unwise to let it go." It seems, in fact, that the Ministry of Education would be damaging itself were it to give up on SHAPE. Other ministries are showing an interest in its programme and many use its infrastruture for their work. The efficiency of the Secretariat has drawn attention, for example, from the Examinations Council who use it as a way to reach heads of schools. The National Curriculum Development Centre has also started looking at SHAPE as a means of creating stronger links between educational content and life in the community.

Conclusion: The SHAPE Legacy

It is difficult to look at the SHAPE programme as a separate entity supported by donors from the outside. It is a Zambian answer to a Zambian question. It began as a rethinking of educational policy and values and took the stagnation of the conventional system as its starting point. Those who began SHAPE realized that the very notion of academic knowledge in the Zambian context had to be questioned. What pupils needed and what they were getting were two different things. As such SHAPE is a wide reform movement and solution for a national economic and education crisis. It has upset the culture of the school institution which is top heavy and conventional and initiated a process of consultation for all. The fact that teachers' concepts are now being heeded and implemented by top-level officials is a major breakthrough. Ironically the lack of material reward has encouraged professional and materials development. Other reforms in other countries started by supplying textbooks and new schools but SHAPE begun by building a human network and only responded to demand. Its strength is its message.

SHAPE has spread to every school in the country, because it works and it seems to be an appropriate solution in a time of economic uncertainty. So far SHAPE is present in all of Zambia's 9 provinces, 62 districts, 575 zones and 4,750 primary schools of which 4,000 have economic production units and school furniture repair facilities. According to Mr C. Zulu, Chief Inspector of Schools, the SHAPE programme is the most successful programme ever put in place by a ministry in Zambia, both in terms of its efficiency and its longevity. Various dangers do lurk ahead however.

The economic crisis, the AIDS epidemic and the continuing drought in the southern part of the country are all obstacles that need to be tackled. SHAPE can address many problems but cannot answer all of them. It is certain, however, that through its structure and

message many of the questions facing Zambia can be eased by an increase in awareness and greater interaction between members of the community. It seems important, too, to see SHAPE as a kind of philosophy or a state of mind, a breath of freedom for those bound by economic failure and bureaucratic complications. It is, as many at SHAPE say, "a liberation theology." Its strength is in its flexibility and its empowerment of the individual, the school and the education system. It required no real costly infrastructure only a human network, and the emphasis on self-reliance and initiative was more binding than money. SHAPE is a way for the school and education as a whole to reach the deprived and communicate with them as equal partners, to improve their lives and create an education system ready and willing to adapt to any challenge through resourcefulness and self-help.

SHAPE's main innovative points

- **SHAPE**, before launching its programme, first set about examining the local situation, taking up unnoticed innovations and successful improvisations in schools, listening closely to the teachers and communities and establishing a system of co-ordination.
- **SHAPE** funds in schools and colleges can be inspected at any time by the SHAPE accountant and District and Provincial Education Officers have the final responsibility for funds in their areas. Schools and ultimately district offices are, therefore, accountable for their expenditure.
- **SHAPE**'s emphasis on production in the national curriculum and its extensive ground work has meant that, by definition, each school is a production unit. In the same way, because of INSET, each school is also a teacher-training centre where emphasis is put on teachers' initiative, resourcefulness and ability to train colleagues in new methodologies.
- **SHAPE**'s production work creates funds for schools but also has pedagogical benefits. It confers a greater status on production work in the eyes of the learners and nurtures the imagination.
- **SHAPE** creates teaching aids from local materials which encourages self-reliance.
- **SHAPE** recognizes teachers' innovations and makes them into a permanent structure. It acknowledges that teachers are the main initiators of change in schools and can play an instrumental role in the community.
- **SHAPE** members do not receive a salary from SIDA or from the SHAPE structure.
- **SHAPE**'s strong structure comes from the fact that it is human and not material.
- **SHAPE**'s network is used by other donors.
- **SHAPE** only allocates funds in response to local initiative and capability to sustain those funds. On the whole, however, it transmits a message of self-help, self-reliance and not funds.

Making it work

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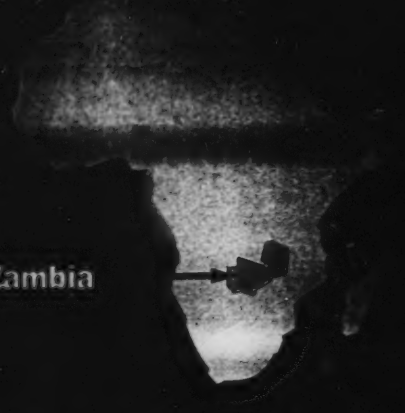
The SHAPE structure in action

SHAPE SECRETARIAT
Mr Lawrence Musonda, Executive Secretary
Miss Esther Banda, Co-ordinator for INSET and Member of Secretariat

Besides their functions as SHAPE Secretariat members, both Mr Musonda and Miss Banda are Inspectors of Schools with salaried jobs and workloads as civil servants of the Ministry of Education. They work for SHAPE on a purely voluntary basis, without remuneration. As Mr Musonda says, when SIDA withdraws we will definitely have jobs, just fewer funds. It is this kind of enthusiasm and not money that fuels the SHAPE spirit and which made it all the more attractive to the government, easing its implementation. Furthermore, the fact that SIDA doesn't pay members means that the SHAPE structure is already independent and capable of withstanding change.



The Secretariat is currently made up of five members, scaled down from an original sixteen following recommendations by SIDA during a recent evaluation. The Ministry, the Secretariat and SIDA discuss policy and inform the Chief Inspector of Schools of new changes. But Mr Musonda and Miss Banda say that this mutual consultation process with SIDA and the committees does not hinder their independence. SHAPE may be about self reliance but dialogue with partners greatly eases the running of the programme.

Mrs Lwara, Provincial Chairperson for SHAPE
Mrs Malawo, Provincial Co-ordinator for SHAPE
Mrs Musokotwane, Provincial Co-ordinator for INSET, Special Education Adviser
Mrs H Mwiyakui, Co-ordinator for SHAPE

Outside of organize SHAPE activities within a set area. In our case [illegible] and has been [illegible] great deal of [illegible] the field before [illegible] the Secretariat. A [illegible] joined to work for SHAPE as it improved the quality of [illegible] opportunities for [illegible] and raised their [illegible] As Mrs [illegible] realize [illegible] In fact all four [illegible] pupils now [illegible] They have [illegible] Mrs Lwara [illegible]

Zambia in facts and figures

Population: 8.7 million
Density of inhabitants per sq.km: 12
Average annual population growth rate: 3.4
Rural Population (as percentage of total): 58
Expenditure on education as percentage of GNP: 2.8
Adult illiteracy rate: 21.8
- **Female illiteracy rate: 28.7**
- **Male illiteracy rate: 14.4**

Duration of compulsory education: 7 years
Pupil-teacher ratio (first level): 44:1

Sources: World Education Report, UNESCO, 1995
UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1994

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Making it work
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Chief Inspector of Schools: Mr C. Zulu

Mr Zulu at the Ministry of Education [illegible] for reading the SHAPE programme has helped him in his position as Chief Inspector of Schools. [illegible] he says. "Now SHAPE has stepped into every home, teacher and parent in Zambia. It has [illegible] of lifeline for the smooth running [illegible] fact that there are 4 750 primary schools but only 600 secondary schools means that many pupils who are not able to enter secondary school must learn [illegible] allow them to survive and pull through the problems of adversity. This self reliance aspect has also managed to reduce the dependence of parents in periods of hardship and even in floods, reinforcing the feeling of national identity. As regards sustainability, Mr Zulu says that the Ministry is going to make budgetary provisions for the good continuity of SHAPE [illegible] for the [illegible] of the Ministry. The Chief Inspector has recently had a chance to [illegible] Botswana. "Other countries [illegible] says, "might take a leaf out of our book."

Teachers and in-service trainers: Mr L. Mutaka, Mrs Sichula and Mr Fundanga

"Things have changed. We teach each other [illegible] hands and build." During production classes pupils learn how to make chopping boards, [illegible] scales, repair desks. Both girls and boys join in. Boys sewing and girls building. Agricultural lessons and work in the fields around Lusaka district have allowed schools to earn much-needed funds with the sale of cabbages and tomatoes. The teachers are enthusiastic about the changes SHAPE has brought about in the minds of the teaching staff and the material benefits that have come. The geographical structure of zones or school clusters they add, has enabled them to share experiences and look for solutions from colleagues often in an informal way. Mr Fundanga talks of the pride teachers feel for their schools: the way we look after our schools is the way we look after our homes."

A SHAPE school at work

Nalitowe Basic School takes pride in carrying out the principles that lie at the heart of the SHAPE programme. The school is a hive of activity where even the learning materials (rakes, geometric shapes and ink pots) are made by the pupils and teachers. Fields of tomatoes and cabbages and a new orchard spread around the school. Each child has a tree or a vegetable plant which he or she is asked to look after. They protect this plant with particular care and as the head of agriculture says, "If the plant looks unhealthy, they have to answer for it." This sense of responsibility and duty is also used by the school cleanliness programme under the guidance of a Preventive Maintenance Co-ordinator. Again each child has an area of the school which he or she has to clean and is responsible for its upkeep.

The success of the school in terms of productivity has unfortunately led to numerous thefts. The school is fighting back [illegible] building skills learnt through SHAPE's in-service training, the teachers are showing pupils how to [illegible] are putting up a large wall all around the school. A gate welded with machine provided by SHAPE has been put up [illegible]. The situation, however, is worse in other schools. At Lusaka West Secondary in Livingstone, there's a hive of activity as pupils are building small houses on the school grounds. This will allow them to be present at all times and thus [illegible] hopefully, deter potential thieves and vandals. Using their resourcefulness, each school employing the SHAPE training is slowly becoming a haven of cleanliness, productivity and knowledge away from the troubles of the outside world. The surrounding communities are happy about these changes and the school's success. Parents can now come and [illegible] vegetables at [illegible] nearer their homes and many families not connected to the school arrive in the morning to buy [illegible] vegetables. The money earned is ploughed back into the school in the form of teaching materials and the purchase of [illegible]

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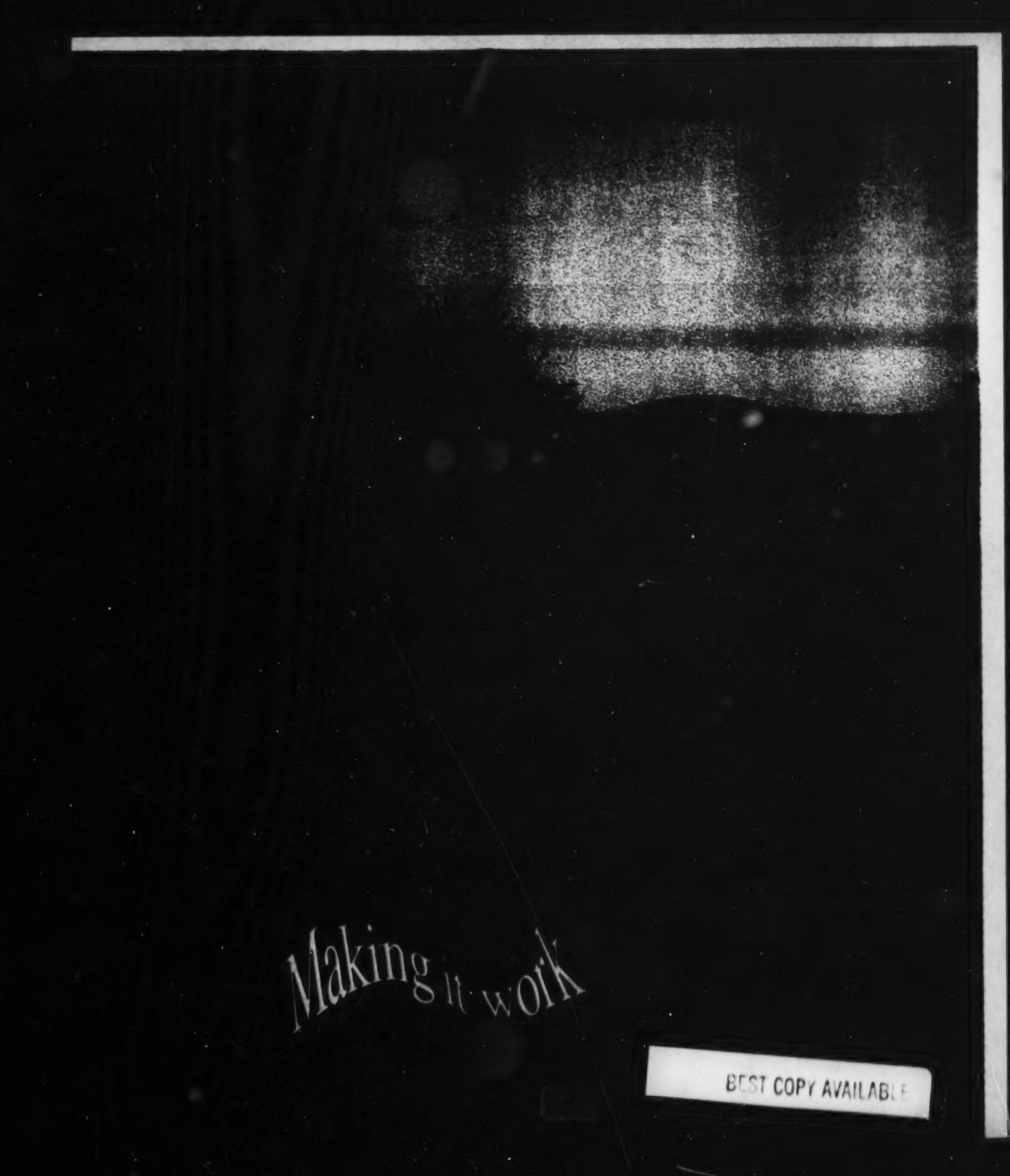

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